

# **2020 APAAC Prosecutor Award Ceremony**



*Seeking Justice & Serving Communities*



**December 16, 2020**



# 2020 APAAC Prosecutor Award Ceremony

## December 16, 2020

**11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.**

### **OPENING REMARKS / RECOGNITION**

- ❖ Award Nominees
- ❖ Art Calendar Winners
- ❖ What You Do Matters: Lessons from the Holocaust Retiring Facilitators

*Elizabeth Burton Ortiz, APAAC Executive Director*

*Sheila Polk, Yavapai County Attorney, APAAC Chair*

**11:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

### **BREAK**

**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

### **LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

*Kimberly Overton Spahos, Chief Resource Prosecutor,  
North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys*

**1:00 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.**

### **BREAK**

**1:10 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

### **PRESENTATION OF AWARDS**

- ❖ Felony Prosecutor of the Year Award (Large Jurisdiction)
- ❖ Felony Prosecutor of the Year Award (Small Jurisdiction)
- ❖ Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year Award
- ❖ Juvenile Prosecutor of the Year Award
- ❖ Prosecutor Rising Star Award
- ❖ Appellate Prosecutor of the Year Award
- ❖ David R. White Excellence in Victim Advocacy Award
- ❖ Lifetime Achievement Award
- ❖ Gerda & Kurt Klein Guardian of Freedom Prosecutor Award

*Elizabeth Burton Ortiz, APAAC Executive Director*

# Award Nominees

## Felony Prosecutor of the Year - Large Jurisdiction



**Dawn Aspacher & Victoria Otto**  
**Pima County Attorney's Office**

During her 15 years as a prosecutor, Victoria “Vicki” Otto has been a champion for victims of auto theft, violent crime, homicide, domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual crimes, and child physical abuse. Currently assigned to the Special Victims Bureau, Vicki works daily with the most traumatized victims, spending countless hours gaining their trust and helping

prepare them for what lies ahead. Dawn Aspacher is currently the supervisor of the Misdemeanor Crime Unit. During her 11 years as a prosecutor, Dawn has been a champion for victims of auto theft, sexual assault, child sexual crimes, and child abuse. Their calm demeanors and reassuring manners help comfort victims and witnesses, and convey genuine empathy and respect. Dawn and Vicki each had astounding years, and together did extraordinary prosecutorial work in the trials of Raquel and Martin Barreras.



**Shaylee Beasley**  
**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**

Shaylee Beasley handles some of the most complicated and difficult cases at the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office. In 2019, Shaylee convicted three defendants who thought the State had no chance at conviction. In one she co-ried a defendant who murdered his girlfriend and discarded her body. Despite never locating the victim’s body, Shaylee and her co-chair were able to show the jury how defendant committed murder and sought to cover his tracks. In another case, the defendant poisoned her husband with a nearly untraceable chemical. Shaylee secured a conviction of Attempted Murder by exposing the defendant’s digital trail and deceit. In the third, the defendant was acquitted of murder in the 1990’s by claiming self-defense; a claim he incorrectly

assumed would work again in the shooting death of his brother in 2018. Thanks to Shaylee’s dedication and hard work, she was able to achieve justice these victims.

# Award Nominees

## Felony Prosecutor of the Year - Large Jurisdiction (continued)



**Steve Duplissis**  
**Arizona Attorney General's Office**

Under Steve Duplissis' leadership, the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Section of the Attorney General's Office was recognized in 2019 as the second highest performing Medicaid Fraud Unit in the nation for filing criminal indictments. This impressive achievement is unsurprising given Steve's unwavering passion to investigate and prosecute medical professionals who defraud the government and abuse some of Arizona's most vulnerable residents. Steve inspires that same passion in his employees, and they directly benefit from his thoughtful mentorship. As a result, Steve's section oversaw over 100 cases in 2019, ranging from large-scale Medicaid billing fraud to a former doctor's murder for hire. Additionally, Steve pursues unique collaborations with local, state, and federal partners, such as his recent partnership with the Arizona Board of Pharmacy, to proactively protect Arizonans from medical fraud. Steve is an asset to Arizona's prosecution community.

## Felony Prosecutor of the Year - Small Jurisdiction



**David Ahl & Shawn Jensvold**  
**Pinal County Attorney's Office**

Responding to reports of shots fired, a Maricopa Police Officer located the victim deceased and slumped over the steering wheel of his car in his garage. The victim was shot several times at close range in the head and torso. The suspect turned out to be an ex-girlfriend who was engaged in paternity suit litigation with the victim. The defendant created an elaborate alibi in which she took a co-worker's car from work, a wig and a hoodie to conceal her identity while committing the murder. Shawn and David worked conscientiously with the assigned detective to build a circumstantial case based on motive and opportunity linked with distance and time-line charts to crush her well-planned and executed alibi defense and convict her at trial. Shawn and David demonstrated exceptional advocacy in pursuing justice in this case.



# Award Nominees

## Felony Prosecutor of the Year - Small Jurisdiction (continued)



**Dan Akers**  
**Cochise County Attorney's Office**

Dan Akers has been a felony prosecutor in our office for nearly 10 years and has previously been nominated for this award. After a brief sojourn as a defense attorney in Phoenix, Dan returned to our office in 2018 to act as senior charging attorney in the Drug Unit. Not satisfied just charging cases, Dan took on a full felony caseload while still issuing the bulk of our drug cases that go into Early Resolution Court. As if that wasn't enough work for one attorney, Dan took on a serious aggravated assault case from another county as conflict counsel. Dan then agreed to take on an older aggravated assault case with the same defendant that had previously been dismissed without prejudice. To further complicate matters, defendant was a prohibited possessor, so four separate trials would need to be set in the other county. Dan spent a week in that county trying the first case, and several issues arose to include the victim being arrested for meth for sale the week before trial, and the Presiding Judge and elected Clerk of the Court battling over the location of stored evidence. After Dan secured a guilty verdict in the first trial, he successfully litigated the evidence security issue that came about from the Presiding Judge/Clerk of the Court dispute, which garnered local media attention in that community. Eventually Dan was able to negotiate favorable plea agreements to resolve the remaining 3 cases. Dan is a true workhorse, a go-to guy around the office for his knowledge of caselaw, an excellent legal writing editor, and an all-around asset to our felony unit.



**Karolina Czaplinska**  
**Mohave County Attorney's Office**

Karolina Czaplinska is a true minister of justice, always seeking to do the right thing in every case. Karolina handles very complex and high-profile cases including homicide and child sex crimes. Outside of her crushing case load and felony trial schedule, Karolina volunteers at a local high school with the Marshall-Brennan Club which has produced top place finishes by local high school students in national competitions against much larger schools and programs. Overcoming the odds and doing hard things is normal for Karolina.

# Award Nominees

## Felony Prosecutor of the Year - Small Jurisdiction (continued)



**George Rodriguez**  
**Yavapai County Attorney's Office**

George Rodriguez joined the Yavapai County Attorney's Office nine years ago and has handled nearly every position from misdemeanors, the county drug task force, our charging division and our felony trial team. In 2019, George successfully prosecuted a 41-year old fiduciary in the Verde Valley who stole nearly \$95,000 from two of her vulnerable clients, one of whom passed away prior to the trial. George combed through thousands of complex accounting records to successfully present to the jury the scheme by which the defendant laundered clients' money into her own accounts.



**Rachel Shackelford**  
**La Paz County Attorney's Office**

Rachel Shackelford is committed to taking the toughest and most difficult cases to trial. She has served as a Deputy La Paz County Attorney for more than 7 years and currently serves as the domestic violence felony prosecutor. She handles all aspects of DV prosecution, including cases that involve the killing of a child. She successfully prosecuted a father who kicked his three-year-old daughter in the stomach causing her stomach to rupture and leak

into her gut. The child died several hours later, and the father blamed the family dog for the injury. The jury returned guilty verdicts after less than 3 hours of deliberation. The Defendant was sentenced to natural life. Rachel has made our community safer due to her steadfast dedication to seek justice for the family of the deceased child.

# Award Nominees

## Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year



**Blaine Donovan**  
**Coconino County Attorney's Office**

Blaine Donovan is Senior Misdemeanor Prosecutor in the Coconino County Attorney's Office. For 13 years Blaine has handled every kind of misdemeanor case from seventeen different referring agencies including county, state and federal territories. Blaine also leads the misdemeanor prosecution team that trains entry level lawyers in the fundamental skills of being the State's prosecutor. He has trained numerous prosecutors and many of the current best practitioners in our office.



**William Emerson**  
**City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office**

The City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office proudly nominates William Emerson in recognition for his exceptional advocacy and his outstanding trial work on behalf of the State. Since January 2019, William was assigned 88 cases that were set to a jury trial. His preparedness and trial skills resulted in guilty verdicts in seven separate jury trials and 54 other defendants changed their plea to guilty in cases that William handled. His continuous hard work, trial successes and dedication to the pursuit of justice make William Emerson deserving of this prestigious award.

# Award Nominees

## Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year (continued)



**Brandon Espinosa**  
**Tucson City Attorney's Office**

Brandon Espinosa came to the Tucson City Prosecutor's Office after spending four and one-half years prosecuting felonies. He describes the importance of misdemeanor prosecution as an opportunity to really make a difference. For victims of domestic violence, he values his role in advocating for those who, in many cases, are standing up for themselves for the first time after having been repeatedly preyed upon. For offenders, he respects the power of his position as a prosecutor and not only "strikes hard blows" to convict the guilty, but also seeks justice where guilt cannot be proved and exercises discretion where law and policy allow. Having prosecuted felony DUIs, Brandon is keenly aware of how misdemeanor DUI convictions affect future prosecutions and

convictions for felony DUI. Brandon's professionalism reflects positively on prosecutors statewide.



**Tom McDermott**  
**Pinal County Attorney's Office**

A wealthy hunter paid \$250,000.00 for a tag to hunt a prime Desert Bighorn Sheep in the Superstition Mountain area of Arizona. He then paid a guide \$20,000.00 to bag this sheep. The hunter and guide then, in violation of Arizona Law, used aircraft to locate the wildlife and to assist in the hunt. Tom worked exhaustively with Arizona Game and Fish officers using social media, telephone downloads and GPS coordinates to prove the conspiracy and air surveillance to assist the hunt. Tom

demonstrated a profound commitment to ensuring integrity in the hunt and to the greater cause of conservation of Arizona's wildlife.



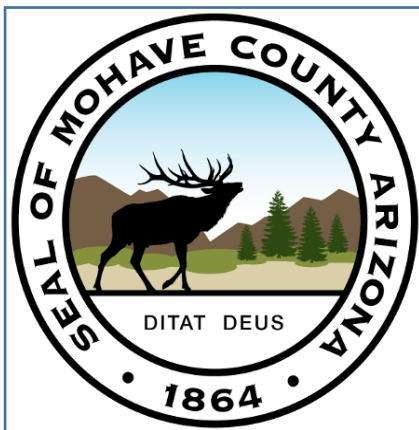
# Award Nominees

## Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year (continued)



**Christopher Michalsky**  
**Yavapai County Attorney's Office**

Christopher Michalsky has a bright future as a prosecutor as has been demonstrated by his work in the Verde Valley Justice Court. He has a natural ability to “learn on the fly” and, although he has been a prosecutor for less than one year, he demonstrates the ability of someone who has been in the position much longer. Chris’s sense of fairness and justice are admirable and his contributions to the office are plenty. His easy-going personality makes him a favorite among his peers as does his uncanny ability to recall a variety of statutes in an instant. Chris’s knack for prosecution and his commitment to justice make him Yavapai County’s nominee.



**Cameron Patt**  
**Mohave County Attorney's Office**

Cameron Patt passionately pursues justice in all his cases, including 29 bench trials, 4 misdemeanor jury trials and one felony jury trial in 2019. In his short career as a prosecutor he has obtained great success in a number of difficult DV and animal control cases. Cameron's work ethic and professionalism are an example to others. His positive attitude and eagerness to meet the challenges of each new day are remarkable.

# Award Nominees

## Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year (continued)



**Rachel Raynes**  
**Cochise County Attorney's Office**

The Cochise County Attorney's Office is excited to nominate Rachel Raynes. Our misdemeanor division covers 6 JP Courts in an area roughly the size of Connecticut. Due to staffing shortages Rachel has been the sole assigned prosecutor for 4 of those Justice Courts for nearly a year. This has required Rachel to travel extensively to outlying rural areas while working with a variety of state and local law enforcement agencies. Last summer Rachel litigated the heavily contentious DUI trial of a local attorney in our community. Due to personal conflicts between the defendant and our office, Rachel was supervised by Beth Barnes throughout the pre-trial litigation and jury trial. After a three-day trial resulting in guilty verdict Ms. Barnes gave us glowing remarks about Rachel's trial advocacy and preparation. Recently Rachel successfully tried a DUI case against the most prominent DUI defense attorney in our county. Not surprisingly, the defense attorney tried to get a reckless driving offer from one of Rachel's senior colleagues the morning of trial. The colleague deferred to Rachel's judgment. Rachel held firm with her evaluation of the case and won the jury trial, even though the Justice of the Peace was exceedingly deferential to defense counsel's arguments and objections during trial. Rachel has the reputation amongst the local defense bar for being the toughest DUI prosecutor in our county, and she has earned that reputation.



**René Schenks**  
**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**

A longtime prosecutor, René Schenks has acquired extensive expertise in DUI and other traffic cases and is a sought-after trainer. Recently, René has been an assistant supervisor over a misdemeanor bureau that handles cases in 12 of the County's justice courts. René guides our newest prosecutors by applying her creativity and sense of fairness. She stays current in all areas and shares her vast knowledge by regularly creating and conducting trainings for the new prosecutors. Her personality and communication skills allow her to deal effectively with pro per defendants, defense attorneys, victims, and law enforcement. René regularly assists new prosecutors in trial, whether as first-chair or second. Her own caseload tends to involve the most difficult cases requiring collision reconstruction expertise.

# Award Nominees

## Juvenile Prosecutor of the Year



**Griselda Cordova**  
**Yuma County Attorney's Office**

"Griselda is regarded as role model of integrity and ethical behavior..." Deputy Director Mendez, Juvenile Court. It is with great enthusiasm that we nominate Griselda Cordova for outstanding and exceptional performance as a juvenile prosecutor. Her dedication to justice and her surrounding community is reflected in her untiring work both in the office and out. In addition to carrying a full caseload and acting as a strong advocate for victims' rights, Griselda works tirelessly with all stakeholders involved in the Juvenile Justice Center and participates in a variety of outreach programs. These include, but are not limited to,

Community Justice Boards, a diversion program for juvenile offenders, Juvenile Drug Court, and numerous community programs set up to educate parents and the community regarding a recent fentanyl crisis involving juveniles as well as educating school resource officers, educators and parents on issues surrounding truancy.



**Jacqueline Molina**  
**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**

Jackie Molina Ondracek is an accomplished, persuasive trial attorney and passionate advocate with excellent oral advocacy skills who manages a heavy case load that includes complex and serious cases. She has excellent relationships with our administrative professionals, advocates, her fellow attorneys, defense counsel and is well-respected by our judicial officers. Jackie is genuinely concerned about holding juveniles responsible for their actions and obtaining the best outcome for the victim and the community. Jackie is routinely assigned cases involving violent crimes and she willingly takes on cases that require extensive contact with victims and considerable disclosure. She expertly handles complicated restitution matters, having successfully resolved several cases this

year. Along with two colleagues, she created a curriculum for the MCAO Girls LEAD program and is providing outreach to at-risk children at a local elementary school.

# Award Nominees

## Prosecutor Rising Star Award



**Amanda Claerhout**  
**Mohave County Attorney's Office**

Amanda Claerhout's initiative and drive are the hallmark of her young legal career and are only surpassed by Amanda's professionalism. Amanda is the supervising attorney of our local drug task force and has earned the respect of all participating task force agencies as well as defense attorneys and the bench. Amanda completed eight (8) felony jury trials in 2019.



**Enrique Gonzales, Jr.**  
**Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office**

It is with pleasure that we nominate Enrique Gonzales, Jr. Enrique has been prosecuting for almost three years, and we are so fortunate that he has devoted that time to Santa Cruz County. Enrique treats every case as if it were the most important case in the office. He never backs down from a defense attorney challenge. He treats every victim with respect and compassion and works tirelessly to achieve justice. Enrique is quick to offer advice and assistance in many other cases. As a misdemeanor prosecutor, he volunteered to take on a vehicular homicide case. We can always count on him to step up unsolicited and volunteer to take on any challenge. To say he does a great job is an understatement. Enrique is truly a rising star and you will be hearing more from him in the future.



# Award Nominees

## Prosecutor Rising Star Award (continued)



**Tessa Hustead**  
**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**

Tessa Hustead became a Deputy County Attorney in November 2017 and has risen to every challenge. Tessa excelled in the Pretrial Division and was quickly assigned to the Major Offenders Division, Repeat Offender Program Bureau (ROP). There, Tessa has completed 8 jury trials (5 jury trials as first chair, and 3 as second chair) and resolved a bureau-leading 136 cases by plea. She has prosecuted a wide variety of felonies from Organized Retail Theft to Armed Robbery. Tessa's trial skills, intellect, and hard work ensure that justice was achieved in each case she handled; and, as a result, victims and the community have been protected.



**Evan Malady**  
**Arizona Attorney General's Office**

Evan Malady started working in the Fraud & Special Prosecutions Section of the Attorney General's Office (AGO) on February 11, 2019. Evan previously worked at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office for two years. Since he started at the AGO, he has become proficient in his position, developing his skills in directing and managing complex fraud and other investigations. Although only a two-year lawyer with minimal prosecution experience, Evan has not hesitated from handling a wide variety of complex fraud cases. He has exceptional organizational skills, communicates well with law enforcement agents, defense attorneys, and court staff; and is known for working very hard.

# Award Nominees

## Prosecutor Rising Star Award (continued)



**Celeste Robertson**  
**Apache County Attorney's Office**

Celeste's very brief, at this time, career as a prosecutor has been nothing short of phenomenal. Her time spent in our office prior to becoming an attorney has prepared her for the whirlwind that was her first year. Some of the highlights include: sitting second chair on a month-long premeditated murder trial BEFORE graduating from law school (she took a day away from trial to attend graduation); taking a hands-on active part in that trial, which was the longest criminal trial in Apache County history; and,

helping secure a conviction and some closure for the mother of the Victim 7 years after her son's life was taken from her. All of this while her classmates were celebrating, relaxing or, in rare instances, studying for the upcoming bar exam. Since then, she has taken and passed the bar and enthusiastically jumped in to prosecute juveniles, misdemeanors, and felonies within the office. She already has a great reputation with the bar and the bench for her tireless commitment to seeing justice done.



**Chelsea Stacey**  
**Phoenix City Prosecutor's Office**

Chelsea Stacey is nominated for her outstanding work in a short time as a prosecutor. In her first year as a prosecutor, Chelsea has tried 3 DUI jury trials, in addition to over 50 bench trials. Chelsea has actively sought out and tackled head-on the most difficult victimless prosecution cases and has obtained guilty verdicts in 6 bench trials without the victims present. Chelsea consistently demonstrates an extraordinary work ethic when preparing for her cases. She regularly goes above and beyond, putting in countless extra hours. She has a great working relationship with other attorneys, judges, court staff, and advocates. Her genuine passion, eagerness to take on new challenges, and dedication to ensure justice is done in every case, makes her our nominee.

# Award Nominees

## Prosecutor Rising Star Award (continued)



**Hayley Weigold**  
**Pima County Attorney's Office**

Hayley Weigold is a rising star. Hayley is a Deputy County Attorney in the Pima County Attorney's Office. She graduated from The University of Arizona, James E Rogers College of Law in May 2017. After graduating law school, Hayley spent a year clerking for Superior Court Judge James Marner. Hayley joined the Pima County Attorney's Office in 2018 and has served in the Misdemeanor Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit, and the Special Victims Unit. In her current position in the Special Victims Bureau, Hayley prosecutes especially difficult and challenging cases - domestic violence, sexual offenses committed against adults and children, child physical abuse, and internet crimes against children. She works daily with traumatized victims, spending countless hours gaining their trust and helping prepare them for what lies ahead.

## Appellate Prosecutor of the Year Award



**Terry Crist**  
**Arizona Attorney General's Office**

Terry Crist has been an Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Appeals Section of the Attorney General's Office for nearly seven years. He is assigned some of the most challenging cases and can always be counted upon to do an outstanding job. He is a tremendous writer and an exceptional oral advocate. In 2019, Terry handled two difficult cases of note. In *State v. Arias*, he briefed and argued a high-profile murder case in which Arias's appellate counsel raised six issues, including numerous claims of prosecutorial misconduct. The judges repeatedly hammered Terry during oral argument. Terry did a masterful job of parrying off the attack, defending the prosecutor, and, most importantly, defending the conviction. His argument was so effective that, at a CLE event, a court of appeals judge cited Terry's argument as "an example of effective advocacy." Additionally, Terry briefed and argued *Crespin v. Ryan* in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The issue in this case was whether Crespin was entitled to a resentencing under *Miller v. Alabama* and *Montgomery v. Louisiana* because he was a juvenile when he committed murder, despite the fact that he pled guilty and agreed to a natural life sentence. The court was very active during oral argument, and Terry did an effective job of answering the judges' questions and defending the sentence.

# Award Nominees

## Appellate Prosecutor of the Year Award (continued)



**Mari Worman**  
**Tucson City Prosecutor's Office**

Mari Worman is the City of Tucson's appellate attorney nominee. She understands the importance of creating good case law at the misdemeanor level – knowing that how she handles and argues her cases will have a statewide impact. Her recent achievements in DUI prosecution culminated in three favorable published opinions from Division 2 of the Arizona Court of Appeals and one from the Arizona Supreme Court. She currently has another Division 2 case that she wrote and argued under review. She attacks all problems in a concise and intelligent way, managing to identify issues and provide innovative responses. Her appeals are well written, easy to follow, and fully backed by case and statutory law. Her oral arguments are cogent and responsive to the Judge's questions. She remains calm in the face of pressure, articulating her points with confidence. Mari is a strong advocate for the law and a superb appellate prosecutor.

## David R. White Excellence in Victim Advocacy Award



**Ashley Enderle**  
**Pima County Attorney's Office**

After graduating from Gonzaga Law School in 2013, Ashley Enderle joined the Pima County Attorney's Office as a prosecutor in 2014. Assigned to the Office's Major Crimes Bureau, she prosecutes difficult and complex cases and has always been a stalwart champion of victims of Pima County's most dangerous criminals. She works with victims daily to gain their trust and prepare them for trial. These cases require complete dedication in the pursuit of justice to secure accountability for defendants and empowerment for victims. Ashley is an outstanding prosecutor who obtains justice and accountability for predators and empowers victims who have been violated. Deputy Pima County Attorney Ashley Enderle has distinguished herself as a hero for victims of violent crime.



# Award Nominees

## David R. White Excellence in Victim Advocacy Award (continued)



**Bill Hughes**

**Yavapai County Attorney's Office**

Bill Hughes is an 18-year prosecutor who, despite serving as Chief Criminal Deputy, has maintained a full felony caseload involving the worst types of victim crimes, including child sex crimes and murder. In every case, Bill expertly, and with patience and compassion, answers all victims' questions and prepares them for the often lengthy and sometimes daunting legal process ahead. Bill is often assigned the unsung but important role of talking to victims in cases

where the evidence does not support prosecution. Bill handles these difficult conversations with grace and professionalism, laced with genuine empathy. Bill also has the unenviable job of reviewing proposed legislation for its impact on the state of Arizona, but always with an eye toward possible impact on victims. Bill continues to approach felony prosecution with zeal, ensuring victims have a voice and their rights are preserved.



**Shannon Johanni**

**City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office**

The City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office proudly nominates Shannon Johanni in recognition for her outstanding service and exceptional advocacy on behalf of crime victims. Shannon's experience, as a Domestic Violence Justice Specialist handling high-risk DV cases and as a specialist in cases involving motor-vehicle collisions that resulted in death or serious physical injury, has benefitted countless crime victims. She has exemplified what it means to be an advocate for victims' rights, and her work has had a beneficial impact on her colleagues and the community.

# Award Nominees

## David R. White Excellence in Victim Advocacy Award (continued)



**Shawn Steinberg**  
**Attorney General's Office**

Assistant Attorney General Shawn Steinberg is a remarkable voice for all the crime victims she represents; however, she deserves special recognition for her work with the victim's family in a murder case involving two defendants who frequently committed home-invasions in an attempt to steal drugs. When she noticed that these dangerous offenders would taunt the next of kin, she made appropriate records with the court, often drawing the ire of the defendants and sometimes their attorneys. When confrontations would occur in the hallway, Shawn

would de-escalate the situation, assisting the victim's family by contacting security to protect the victim's family or to remove parties from the courtroom, as needed. Shawn worked closely with the victim advocate and the next of kin to craft plea agreements that would reflect the nature of the case, the defendants' criminal histories and relative involvement, and ensure justice for the victim was achieved.



**Hope Sullivan**  
**Tucson City Prosecutor's Office**

Hope Sullivan is the Tucson City Prosecutor's nominee. Without exception, when asked to describe Hope, every person who works regularly with her describes the genuine empathy with which she addresses every case and every victim. In a cycle and society that still often judges the victims of domestic violence as harshly as the offenders, Hope offers victims a space where she listens without judgment or criticism; where she expresses genuine concern for their safety and sincere empathy for the circumstances that have brought them into the criminal justice system. Hope's ability to navigate the complexities of

domestic violence cases has earned her the respect of her colleagues both in the Prosecutor's Office and the defense community, as well as the respect of judges, law enforcement, victim advocates, and the victims with whom she has engaged.

# Award Nominees

## Lifetime Achievement Award



### **Bunkye Chi**

#### **Pima County Attorney's Office**

Bunkye Chi joined the Pima County Attorney's Office in 1997 as a law clerk. She received her Juris Doctor Degree from The University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law in May 1999 and began her prosecutorial career in the office in January 2000 in the Misdemeanor Unit. She was assigned to the Special Victim's Unit for six years, working with vulnerable victims and handling some of the office's most difficult cases. Since 2010, Bunkye has been assigned to the Juvenile Unit where she has proved herself to be an extremely valuable member of the team and most recently has taken the lead in developing the Juvenile Mental Health Diversion Program. Bunkye has consistently distinguished herself by working tirelessly to advance the principles of criminal justice by representing the public's interest with integrity, fairness, and professionalism.



### **Liliana Ortega**

#### **Santa Cruz County Attorney's office**

It is with great pleasure that the Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office nominates Liliana Ortega. Liliana has been a prosecutor for 20 years and has dedicated her life to public service. She has worked in the Pima County Attorney's Office as a Deputy County Attorney and in the Greenlee County Attorney's Office as the Chief Deputy. She is currently the Chief Criminal Deputy for the Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office. Her service in our office has never been easy as she is required to wear multiple hats. At all times, she must advocate for victims, promote public safety, protect the constitutional rights of the individuals we prosecute, and supervise our Deputy County Attorneys. She has always maintained the highest standards in prosecution and leadership, and has set an outstanding example for all of us to follow. She serves our office, community, and profession with strength, empathy, integrity, and humility. We are fortunate to have Liliana in Santa Cruz County, and she will leave a lasting impression on all those individuals she has served and touched as a prosecutor.

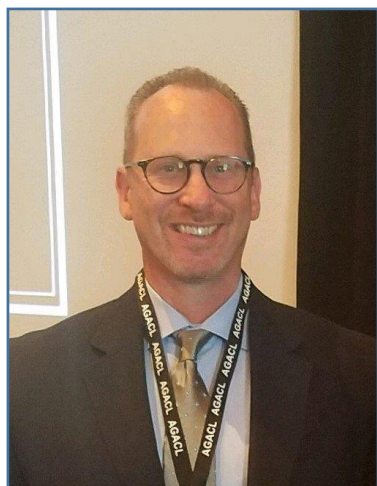
# Award Nominees

## Lifetime Achievement Award (continued)



**Peter Spaw**  
**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**

Peter Spaw leads the Asset Recovery Bureau for the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. This is an area that is under constant scrutiny and good judgment is essential. Over his 20-year career as a prosecutor, Peter has anticipated the issues that would most likely arise and has ensured that he stayed in front of them. Consequently, policies and practices have withstood attack and have not been impacted by court decisions. Peter leads by example, interacting with and training law enforcement partners and handling many of the most difficult cases himself. Peter is widely considered to be an expert in this field, because he is. He is very deserving of this recognition.



**Steve Young**  
**Yavapai County Attorney's Office**

Steve Young joined the Yavapai County Attorney's Office in 1997 as a misdemeanor prosecutor. Today, twenty-three years later, Steve is our go-to veteran with a lifetime of hard-won trials under his belt, the wisdom that comes with years of experience, a never-ending willingness to help others in the office, and the timeless commitment to seek justice in every case he handles. Outside of the office, Steve is a husband and adoring grandfather, an avid fisherman and an athlete. Inside the office, Steve epitomizes everything a prosecutor should be—a top performer who constantly seeks greater legal expertise and knowledge, who never hesitates to assist his peers, and who can always be counted on to step up to the plate without being asked. He is truly a man of integrity, hard work, and proven dedication to making our communities safer.



# Award Nominees

## Gerda and Kurt Klein Guardian of Freedom Prosecutor Award



**Blaine Gadow**  
**Arizona Attorney General's Office**

The Attorney General's Office nominates Blaine Gadow for his prosecution of a human trafficking (sex) trial. The victim's testimony was necessary for the case to proceed. The victim was very anxious and worried about testifying. Instead of using the procedural tools available to prosecutors, such as an arrest warrant to ensure the victim's participation at trial, he empowered her in a trauma-informed, multidisciplinary manner through support, empathy, and providing options that resulted in her choosing to testify of her own will. This effort cut against the idea that prosecutors want to "win at all costs" and confirms Blaine's dedication to the dignity and respect of all victims while ensuring they have a voice in the process. Blaine is a compassionate prosecutor and well-deserving.

# Presenter Biography



**Kimberly Overton Spahos**  
**Chief Resource Prosecutor**  
**North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys**  
*Leadership in Times of Crisis*

A prosecutor, trainer, teacher, speaker and facilitator, Kimberly Overton currently serves with the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys as the Chief Resource Prosecutor where she provides technical assistance, education and training to prosecutors, law enforcement and other criminal justice and allied professionals. Before coming to the Conference of District Attorneys in 2003 as North Carolina's first Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Kimberly served as an Assistant District Attorney in Halifax County, NC working in both district and superior court. As an Assistant District

Attorney and currently as a Special Prosecutor, Kimberly has handled all types of cases ranging from traffic tickets to homicide.

During her tenure as North Carolina's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Kimberly developed a collaborative model program. Authoring several prosecution manuals, law enforcement resource materials and quick reference guides, Kimberly gained national acclaim for the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor program yielding her recognition from various organizations and a two year prosecution fellowship with the National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators (NAPC) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Kimberly has served as faculty for thousands of courses sponsored by numerous criminal justice organizations throughout the world. Lecturing in more than 40 states and 3 countries, she has been instrumental in the creation of an "out of the box" approach to curriculum development and course production. As guest lecturer at Wake Forest and North Carolina Central law schools and adjunct professor for a Prosecution Advocacy course at the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law at Campbell University, Kimberly understands the need to promote a grassroots, ground level approach to criminal justice issues and solutions. As a regular keynote speaker and visiting lecturer at Police Training Academies, Community Colleges, Technical Institutes and Universities throughout the country, she frequently educates students and community organizations regarding criminal justice matters. More recently, Kimberly has been focusing on leadership development curriculum and courses.

Additionally, Kimberly serves on the Professionalism Committee for the Wake County Bar Association, the Executive Board for the National District Attorneys Association, the Standards Committee for the American Bar Association (ABA), as Advisory Committee Chairman of NC MADD, and as the NAPC Highway Safety Committee Chairman. She previously served on the North Carolina Bar Association (NCBA) Board of Governors and the Criminal Justice Section as a Past Chair, the Executive Board for the North Carolina Victim Assistance Network, International Association of Chemical Testing Ethics Committee Chairman, a member of the North Carolina Joint Legislative Taskforce on Fraud Against Older Adults and on the Discovery Task Force for the ABA. Most recently, Kimberly was awarded the NCBA Peter S. Gilchrist Award for extraordinary service as a prosecutor, contributions to the criminal justice system of North Carolina, and to the legal profession. She also served her community as a past Executive Board member with the Woman's Missionary Union of NC.

## Notes

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